

P L A N

OF THE

GENERAL DISPENSARY,

FOR THE

DELIVERY OF POOR

MARRIED AND UNMARRIED WOMEN

AT THEIR OWN HABITATIONS;

AND FOR ADMINISTERING

ADVICE AND MEDICINES

TO ALL THE

INFANT POOR,

AT THE

DISPENSARY,

No. 26,

Wigmore-Street, Cavendish-Square.

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LYING-IN.

THE many applications that have been made to the Committee for the *Delivery* of POOR MARRIED AND UNMARRIED WOMEN at their own Habitations, have induced them to take the same into consideration ; and it is with the most sincere pleasure they now extend the benefit of this humane Institution to that *numerous part of the Community* ; the more effectually to accomplish which, they have engaged a sufficient number of MIDWIVES, remarkable for tenderness, sobriety, and professional abilities, who are to attend the *lying-in* Patients without exception, of what Sect, Country, &c.---they are also to be regularly attended by the Surgeons and Men-midwives when necessary, and supplied with all kinds of *Medical Assistance* for themselves and helpless INFANTS, as their different situations may require, *free of every Expence*.

It is presumed and hoped, that from the very extensive relief so amply distributed, it will be the means of alleviating the sufferings of these indigent beings in the hour of the greatest distress to which that class of Females can be reduced ;---and as this additional and necessary extension of this cha-

eritable Institution evinces a large encrease in its expenditure, it is humbly hoped the humane and affluent will consider it as entitled to an increased Patronage and Support.

INFANT POOR.

AMONG the various Charities which so properly exercise the benevolence of this Nation, no one surely has a better claim to attention and patronage than that which extends its influence to the INFANT POOR. These indeed are objects which convey to our minds a double idea of *Helplessness*, and by which we are doubly called upon to offer every relief in our power.

Persons of opulence, who are enabled to procure the best advice for their Children when afflicted with disease, and to have them attended with unremitting care, often find all their precautions ineffectual to preserve them. Parental affection is common to all ranks of mankind. What resource then has the Poor labourer or mechanic in so trying a situation? The Physician's fee is entirely beyond his reach; and even the few medicines that may be necessary to save his Child from the ravages of an increasing distemper, may prove too costly for him to purchase, without materi-

ally subtracting from his own wants, and those of the rest of his Family. Thus the poor Child is left to its fate, and, if nature should not prove strong enough to avert it must inevitably fall a victim to the neglect occasioned by the total inability of its Parents to procure relief.

The helpless state of the INFANT POOR and the great need they stand in of our assistance, are certainly sufficient motives to excite our compassion ; but these are not the only ones we have to urge in behalf of these distressed objects. Motives of policy plead as strongly for them as those of humanity. It is a well known political maxim, that the strength of a Nation depends upon its population : every plan therefore which tends not merely to preserve that population, but also to preserve it in its full vigour, deserves the encouragement of every individual, zealous for the prosperity of his Country ; and even merits the attention of the Legislature itself. The benefits of such a plan may be extended to numberless generations : If, for instance, by such an Institution, the life of one individual can be preserved to the community, it is impossible to calculate how far such an advantage may extend. An Institution therefore of this kind, in a political view, becomes particularly necessary in LONDON : there the nature of the air, and the mode of living,

combined with the profligacy of manners inseparable from a large Metropolis, are circumstances which not only occasion Children to be neglected, but also make them more liable to disease than children in the Country are, and their diseases are likewise more obstinate and more frequently destructive.

The *Small Pox* is one of those fatal distempers, against the unmerciful ravages of which, the blessing of *Inoculation* has been providentially introduced to preserve the lives of thousands. Either from popular prejudice, or from the fear of expence, this salutary operation is not so prevalent as it ought to be among the lower and more indigent class of the community. *One of the objects of this Institution is, to remedy this evil.* When the Children of the Poor can be *inoculated* without expence, and when they can be supplied gratis with all the Medicines and Advice necessary to counteract the ill effects of this mortal distemper; the practice of *Inoculation*, and the acknowledged benefits resulting from it, will be universally diffused among the lower ranks of the people.

Another circumstance which renders such a Charity particularly useful is, that when Children are ill, it is but too common an opinion, however absurd, especially among the lower class, that a Physician cannot be of any service to them, from their not being able

to describe their complaints. Thus every old woman thinks herself as competent to prescribe as a Physician. Hence arises the pernicious practice of stuffing Children with *saffron* and other cordials, and even among the lowest people of all, with *GIN* itself, upon presumption of their having what they call the *gripes*. It is impossible to say, how much the Bills of Mortality are increased by these pernicious drugs. A Charity respectably supported, and which holds out the advice of regular Physicians merely to Children, will certainly, in process of time, overcome these prejudices and fatal practices, and be the means of preserving many valuable and useful lives to the State.

Let us be allowed once more to present the objects of this Charity to every feeling heart. The *INFANT* and the *POOR*! JESUS CHRIST said, *suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*: If as Children then they ought, in imitation of our Saviour's example, to engage our attention, how much more powerfully are we solicited to attend to their relief, from the additional circumstance of their being poor. Shall the noted benevolence of this Nation, which has so amply provided for the poor and sick in every other situation, be with-holden only from the helpless state of Infancy trembling under the

pangs of disease? Surely not.---Let us rather hope, that this necessary establishment will speedily advance, as many others have done under similar circumstances, to general patronage and estimation.

REGULATIONS.

I. The Dispensary is open at No. 26, WIGMORE-STREET, CAVENDISH-SQUARE, where attendance is given by one of the Surgeons, from Ten to Two o'Clock every Day, Sundays excepted, to admit new Patients; but if any are prevented from attending through illness or infectious disorders, they will be visited at home, on sending their Letter of Recommendation to the Dispensary. The Physicians attend three days in the week (gratis) to prescribe for the Patients.

II. A Benefaction of Twenty Guineas or upwards, or an Annual Subscription of Three Guineas, constitutes a Director.

III. A Benefaction of Ten Guineas, or an Annual Subscription of One Guinea constitutes a Governor.

IV. Directors have the privilege of having two Patients on the Books at a time, and Governors one.

V. Vice-Presidents, Directors, and Governors, constitute a standing Committee, who meet on the first Monday

of every Month, for conducting the affairs of this Charity. Three to form a Quorum. All Committees to be open, and every Contributor at liberty to attend them.

VI. In order to render the benefits to be derived from this Institution as extensive as possible, it is resolved, That all INFANT POOR whose disease require immediate relief, shall be admitted to the full benefit of this Charity, on application being made at the Dispensary.

VII. That the Secretary do attend all Meetings of the Committee, and general Meetings; and take the Minutes, keep exact Accounts of the Receipts and Disbursements of the Charity, and a Register of all the Patients, with the times of their admission, &c. And that the Books be always open for the inspection of Subscribers who may be inclined to look into them.

VIII. The Patients are to appear clean and decent, and strictly to observe such directions as shall be given by the Physicians, otherwise they will be discharged.

IX. Every Patient when well, is required to carry a Letter of Thanks (which will be given at the Dispensary) to the Subscriber, by whom recommended, that enquiry may be made into the treatment they received; on the neglect of which, such Patient shall not receive any future Benefit from this Charity.

X. If any cause of complaint should arise, the Subscribers are requested to communicate the same to the Secretary, for the information of the committee, who will immediately enquire into and correct the abuse.

*Number of Children admitted to this Charity from
the 1st. of May, 1785, to the 1st. of May, 1789,
being Four Years, 863.*

Whereof were discharged, cured	-	-	485
Relieved	-	-	200
Discharged for irregularity	-	-	41
Dead	-	-	30
Remain under Cure	-	-	107
Total			<u>863</u>

SUBSCRIPTIONS are received at the following Places :

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HERCY, BIRCH, and HOBBS, *Bond-street.*

MESSRS. DOWNE, THORNTON, and Co. *Bartbolemew-lane.*

The TREASURER, No. 16, *Cornbill.*

The SECRETARY, No. 29, *Gresse-street, Rathbone-place.*

At the Dispensary, No. 26, *Wigmore-street, Cavendish-square,*

And by the Bearer, for which they will give printed Receipts.

Governors for Life,

ROBERT THORNTON, Esq. M. P.

£. s.

10 10

HENRY THORNTON, Esq. M. P.

10 10

List of Subscribers.

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